

Godhead Class

November/December 2018

November 18: Who is the Son?

We have seen that there are three persons who share in the Divine nature – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. In this study, we want to examine the second person of the Godhead, the Son.

John's gospel account picks up in a similar place as the book of Genesis: the beginning. Rather than focusing on the creation of the material world, John turns his focus toward Jesus. In the course of John 1, we are taken from eternity past (1.1) to the moment of the incarnation¹ (1.14); beginning in verse 15, John begins his historical account of the life and work of Jesus Christ. However, John's first few sentences serve to establish a reality that is crucial to our understanding of Jesus: the incarnation was not the beginning of His existence. Before He came in flesh, the Son was with the Father at the beginning.

Perhaps more than any other author of Scripture, John focuses on the divinity and humanity of Jesus. While this concept was shocking to many Jews, it should not have been (Isaiah 9.6). Though Jesus came in flesh, this did not nullify His divinity. He claimed to be the Son of God (John 3.15f; 5.17f); His miracles confirmed His claims (John 20.30f). By claiming to be the Son of God, He was claiming to be God (divine), as well. While He and the Father are separate persons, they both are accurately called "God". Harkening to the concept of *Elohim*, Jesus would authoritatively declare His oneness with the Father (John 10.30ff). In the moments leading to the cross, Jesus prayed to the Father to

¹ The concept of coming in flesh (in + carn)

restore Him to the glory which He possessed with the Father in eternity past (John 17.5).

Just as Jesus' humanity does not nullify His divinity, neither does His deity nullify His humanity. Scripture clearly reveals for us the fact of Jesus' humanity beginning at the incarnation. Indeed, the book of Hebrews presents the deity and humanity of Jesus as both necessary concepts to qualify Jesus to be our perfect High priest (Hebrews 2.14ff; 4.14ff; 10.5ff). We must be able to affirm what God reveals to us – that Jesus Christ was both human and divine. How could this be? The incarnation is never fully explained to us in Scripture. However, as noted in our previous lesson, God is capable of limiting Himself; and, indeed, we see Jesus limiting himself while incarnate (Matthew 4.2; 8.24).

The designation of the second Person of the Godhead as the "Son" is consistent with the love between He and the Father (John 10.17). More than this, it is consistent with the willing submission exercised by the Son toward the Father (Philippians 2.5ff; John 5.30; 6.38). His willing submission is not a sign of weakness, but rather indicative of His great love for us, His brethren (Hebrews 2.9-13).

- 1) What does John affirm in about Jesus in John 1.1-14? _____

- 2) By using the term "was" in John 1.1, is John telling us that Jesus stopped being God at some point? _____
- 3) How could Jesus state the Father is greater than Him in John 14.28? _____

- 4) Are the Son and the Father the same person? _____
- 5) Choose one of the designations of Jesus in Isaiah 9.6 and explain what it means: _____